Guinea

The Government of Guinea has strengthened enforcement of child labor laws through the establishment of a new police unit to coordinate child labor investigations. Despite efforts, child labor in agriculture and the trafficking of children persists. Certain gaps remain in the protection of children working in agriculture and domestic service and in the Government's capacity to enforce existing provisions.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Guinea are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, ²⁴⁷⁹ including in agriculture or as victims of trafficking for labor, domestic service and commercial sexual exploitation. ²⁴⁸⁰ Children work in the agricultural sector in the production of cashews, cocoa and coffee. Although evidence is limited, children also engage in herding and the production of cotton, bananas and mangos. ²⁴⁸¹ Children's work in agriculture often includes using sharp tools, handling pesticides, carrying heavy loads, climbing tall trees to gather fruits and exposure to dangerous animals. ²⁴⁸² Children who work in fishing may carry heavy fishing nets and be at risk of drowning. ²⁴⁸³

Children also work in gold and diamond mines and quarries. Children in this sector work long hours, lack protective gear and are vulnerable to accidents, broken bones and respiratory, skin and other diseases.²⁴⁸⁴ Although evidence is limited, there is reason to believe that the worst forms of child labor are also used in the production of bauxite, granite, gravel (crushed stones) and sand.²⁴⁸⁵

Trafficking and prostitution also exist. 2486 Girls are trafficked internally and to Europe as well as from neighboring West African countries to Guinea for commercial sexual exploitation and domestic service. 2487 Boys are trafficked within Guinea to work in agriculture and as street vendors, shoe shiners and beggars. Children who work on the streets may be exposed to severe weather, vehicle accidents and criminal elements.²⁴⁸⁸ Both Guinean boys and girls are trafficked within West Africa for mining, domestic work, forced labor and begging.²⁴⁸⁹ Children are often trafficked by family members, family friends, influential members of the community, or other persons of economic means who falsely promise a better future for the child.²⁴⁹⁰

Through the system of *confiage*, children from rural areas are sent to cities to work or to attend school.²⁴⁹¹ To pay their room and board, children, especially girls as young as age 5, work in domestic service. These children are not paid for their work and may be beaten and sexually exploited.²⁴⁹²

In Guinea, it is traditional practice to send boys, called *talibes*, to Koranic teachers to receive

education, which may include vocational training or apprenticeship.²⁴⁹³ While some boys receive lessons, many are forced by their teachers to beg or work in fields and are sometimes beaten or otherwise mistreated if they fail to meet daily quotas.²⁴⁹⁴

Political instability and socioeconomic hardship stemming from the 2008 coup continued throughout the reporting period. These conditions, combined with a series of natural disasters that reduced harvests and led to increased food prices, have driven more children into exploitative situations, such as trafficking and forced prostitution.²⁴⁹⁵

Access to education is a critical component in preventing the economic exploitation of children. Access to education in Guinea is hindered by a lack of school infrastructure, school fees, low teacher attendance rates, a lack of transportation to and from school and instruction provided in French instead of the local language. Additionally, some children are reportedly physically and sexually abused by teachers. Finally, a significant number of Guinean children were not registered at birth. This lack of birth registration may impede children's access to education as the age of the child must be known before they may gain access to Statesponsored education.

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The minimum age for employment is 16, as set by the Labor Code and Child Code.²⁵⁰⁰ Children may work as apprentices from age 14, or from age 12 for apprenticeships involving light work in domestic service, agriculture and other sectors, with the approval of labor inspectors. The Child Code also includes a list of hazardous occupations from which children are prohibited.²⁵⁰¹ Order 2791/MTASE/DNTLS/96 Working Conditions for Employees Aged under 18 Years excludes children

younger than age 18 from working in hazardous conditions.²⁵⁰² The Mining Code prohibits children under age 16 from working in mines or quarries other than as assistants; however, the role of an assistant is not defined.²⁵⁰³ Because the Labor Code applies only to employment relationships, this protection does not apply to children under age 18 who do not have a formal employment contract.²⁵⁰⁴ Labor Code protections also do not extend to children in unpaid, temporary, or noncontract work in agriculture or domestic service.

MION	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	12
	Free Public Education	Yes

Education is free and compulsory for six years.²⁵⁰⁵ Children who finish their schooling before reaching the legal working age are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, as they are not required to be in school but are not legally permitted to work.

The Child Code prohibits sex tourism, pornography and forcing children to beg. ²⁵⁰⁶ The Labor Code prohibits forced labor. ²⁵⁰⁷ The Child Code and the Penal Code criminalize

child trafficking and prostitution.²⁵⁰⁸ However, the definition of trafficking differs between the two codes. Trafficking as defined in the Child Code is aligned with the international definition of trafficking, while trafficking as defined in the Penal Code is lacking several key elements.²⁵⁰⁹ It is unclear which code takes precedence.

Although the Child Code provides protection for children in the worst forms of child labor, there is some confusion surrounding the legality of the Child Code as it was not accompanied by implementing text from the President.²⁵¹⁰ In addition to rendering the Code legal, the implementing text would lay out penalties for the Child Code.²⁵¹¹ The Ministry of Justice has released an opinion stating that the Child Code is an exception and does not need implementing text. However, there is no evidence that steps to implement the Child Code have been taken.²⁵¹²

During the reporting period, Interim President Konate signed a decree promulgating a new Constitution. The new Constitution denounces child trafficking.²⁵¹³ Along with the new Constitution, laws from the previous Constitution continue to be in effect.²⁵¹⁴

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and **Enforcement**

While there is no agency coordination across the Government on child labor issues, a national committee has been created to monitor and protect children's rights and to implement the Child Code. ²⁵¹⁵ The accomplishments of this committee are unknown. Additionally, the National Committee Against Trafficking (CNLTP), led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, coordinates trafficking efforts. The Committee is comprised of secretariat member representatives from the Ministries of Promotion of Women and Children, Justice and Security. ²⁵¹⁶ It also includes various members of governmental agencies, including the Ministry of Labor, the police, NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in trafficking issues. ²⁵¹⁷

Although the CNLTP is required to meet quarterly on trafficking issues, evidence indicates it met sporadically throughout the reporting period.²⁵¹⁸ The CNLTP coordinates enforcement actions between various actors, including labor inspectors and criminal investigators.²⁵¹⁹

The Ministry of Labor is the lead agency for the enforcement of child labor laws. The Ministry of Labor employs 156 labor inspectors and support staff and conducted four inspections during the reporting period. Labor inspections were limited to large firms in the modern employment sector, even though the majority of children work in sectors such as agriculture. The number of child labor cases revealed by these inspections is unknown. Despite efforts, there is a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation and finances to conduct effective child labor inspections and legal proceedings. The sectors are legal proceedings.

The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Security's Office for the Protection of Children and Morals (OPGEM) also enforces child labor laws. The Ministry of Labor refers criminal cases to the OPGEM, which may also conduct investigations regarding child labor in the formal labor sector. Established during the reporting period, the OPGEM coordinates Guinea's security forces, including the police and the *gendarmes*, in their child labor investigations. ²⁵²⁴

The OPGEM leads enforcement efforts for criminal investigations related to the worst forms of child labor, while the Ministry of High Crimes and Anti-Drug Enforcement is responsible for the enforcement of anti-trafficking laws.²⁵²⁵
The OPGEM employs 56 police officers to investigate crimes of child labor, prostitution and trafficking.²⁵²⁶Local authorities, police and border agents in individual prefectures can apprehend child traffickers at the country's borders.²⁵²⁷ Twelve trafficking cases were referred to the CNLTP during the reporting period. These cases are still under investigation.²⁵²⁸ Trafficking victims must be at least 12 years of age to bring suit against their

trafficker.²⁵²⁹ No prosecutions, convictions, or criminal punishments were handed down during the reporting period.²⁵³⁰ In addition, research indicates that the Government did not take action on known cases of child prostitution.²⁵³¹

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

There is no evidence that the Government of Guinea has a comprehensive policy specifically to combat the worst forms of child labor. However, the Ministries of Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women and Children developed *A World Fit for Children*, a declaration and comprehensive action plan to assist children.²⁵³² It includes general protections and objectives against child labor, mistreatment, exploitation and violence to eliminate trafficking and sexual exploitation.²⁵³³ The plan does not specify concrete activities, tangible outcomes, and targets to achieve its goals.

The PRSP 2007-2010 strengthens social protections for children, establishes mechanisms to raise public awareness on laws and protections for children, and provides implementation strategies for an Education for All Program to improve education in Guinea. The PRSP includes actions to support street children and provisions for combating human trafficking in ECOWAS member countries, including Guinea. 2534

Guinea has a National Policy on Birth Registration, with a goal of registering 100% of children under age 8 by 2015.²⁵³⁵ The Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research has outlined a 7-year (2008-2015) program to address the education sector, which aims to improve access to education, minimize disparities and avoid exclusion from educational opportunities. Results of program implementation are unknown.²⁵³⁶ The impact of this program on the worst forms of child labor has not been assessed.

Although Guinea has a National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the updated plan covering years 2009-2011 has never been published. ²⁵³⁷ Guinea also participates in a number of international policies to address trafficking, such as the Regional Multilateral Cooperative Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons; the Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central African Regions; a working group on child trafficking designed to monitor cross-border trafficking; and a bilateral agreement between Guinea and Mali to combat trafficking. ²⁵³⁸

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Despite the instability brought by the 2008 coup, the transition government, and the 2010 elections, the Government of Guinea continued to work with NGOs and international organizations on anti-trafficking programs.²⁵³⁹ The Government participated in two USDOS-funded projects; one provided services and training to trafficking victims, while the other strengthened the capacity of judges, law enforcers and NGOs on Guinea's legal framework for trafficking.²⁵⁴⁰ The Government also participated in projects implemented by international organizations, including projects that created child protection committees, reviewed human trafficking legislation, provided training and awareness raising on trafficking to media and civil society and provided officials and law enforcement officers with capacity-building training to manage migration and investigate trafficking prosecution.²⁵⁴¹ The Government also took part in an IOM project that identified, returned and reintegrated minors identified as trafficking victims throughout the region.²⁵⁴²

The Government of Guinea participated in two regional USDOL-funded projects, including a

4-year, \$7.95 million regional project and a 3-year, \$5 million regional project, both of which assisted ECOWAS member countries to strengthen regional efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor.²⁵⁴³ It also participated in a 5-year, \$6.6 million, USDOL-funded global project with the goal of enhancing national capacity for child labor data collection, analysis and dissemination.²⁵⁴⁴

The Government participated in a \$24 million multidonor-funded project, which built 1,000 schools, trained teachers and improved Guinean curricula as a part of Guinea's fast track initiative for Education for All.²⁵⁴⁵ During the reporting period, Guinea, along with other African countries, took part in the USAID-funded Ambassador's Scholarship Program, which provided 4,291 Guinean primary school students with scholarships to attend school.²⁵⁴⁶ Guinea also received funding and technical assistance from the ILO in support of its ongoing national child labor survey.²⁵⁴⁷

In order to address the humanitarian crisis brought by political instability and flooding, the Government of Guinea partnered with UNICEF to provide \$5.3 million in emergency relief to reduce child vulnerabilities. Assistance included access to health and nutrition interventions and the construction of temporary learning spaces.²⁵⁴⁸

The Government does not provide services directly but rather refers child trafficking victims to NGO-sponsored services.²⁵⁴⁹ However, the Government does not have a formal referral process for transferring victims.²⁵⁵⁰

Current social programs do not adequately address child trafficking or the most prevalent worst forms of child labor, particularly agriculture and domestic service, where large gaps in laws leave children unprotected.²⁵⁵¹

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Guinea:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Increase the minimum age for compulsory education to correspond with the minimum age for work.
- Complete the implementation framework for the Child Code.
- Harmonize laws relating to the worst forms of child labor, including the Labor and Mining Codes and the Penal and Child Codes.
- Extend protections to children in unpaid, temporary or noncontract work.
- Amend the Mining Code to prohibit all children from participating in hazardous mining.
- Allow persons of any age to bring charges against their traffickers.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Assess budgetary priorities with a view toward providing resources to conduct effective labor inspections and legal proceedings concerning the worst forms of child labor.
- Ensure labor inspections are conducted in all sectors, including those with a high prevalence of child labor.
- Establish a coordinating mechanism for the worst forms of child labor.
- Ensure all cases of child labor are appropriately investigated and prosecuted.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

- Publish the 2009-2011 National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons.
- Set targets and establish concrete outcomes for all policies related to child labor.
- Take measures to ensure children have access to quality education and to ensure children's safety in schools.
- Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor in Guinea

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

- Expand social programs to provide services to children engaged in or at risk of entering into the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture, trafficking, mining and domestic service.
- Ensure the appropriate systems are in place to transfer children from Government authorities to social service protection programs.
- ²⁴⁷⁹ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used in this report. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section.
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- 42. See also Human Rights Watch, *Bottom of the Ladder: Exploitation and Abuse of Girl Domestic Workers*, New York, June 2007; available from http://hrw.org/en/node/10932/section/1. See also U.S. Department of State, "Guinea (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142983.pdf.
- ²⁴⁸¹ U.S. Department of State, "Guinea," in *Country Reports* on *Human Rights Practices- 2009*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, sections 6-7; available from http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135957.htm. See also ILO-IPEC, *Rooting Out Child Labour from Cocoa Farms: Safety and Health Hazards*, Paper No. 2, Geneva, 2007. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request concerning*

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Guinea (ratification: 2003) Published: 2007, February 15, 2011; available from http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=2 0442&chapter=9&query=Guinea%5F%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0. See also ILO, Etude de Base sur le Travail de Enfants en Guinee, 41-42. See also World Education, SELECT - Stop Exploitive Labor and Educate Children for Tomorrow, Project Document, September 2010, 11, 14. See also ILO Committee of Experts, Individual Direct Request concerning Worst Forms of Child Labor, 1999 (No. 182) Guinea (ratification: 2003) Published: 2010, February 15, 2011; available from http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/.

²⁴⁸² World Education, SELECT, Project Document (September 2010), 12.

²⁴⁸³ Ibid., 12, 14.

²⁴⁸⁴ Republic of Guinea and UNICEF, *Etude sur les «Enfants Travaillant dans les Mines et Carrieres»*, Ministère des Affaires Sociales and Ministère de l'Emploi, Conakry, 2006. See also Association Guinéenne de Recherche - Action Et d'Alphabetisation pour le Developpement, *Etude Dans les Zones Minieres (Diamantifère & de l'Or) de Bonodou & Dandano: Lutte Contre la Traite des Personnes à des fins d'exploitation de leur Travail*, 2007. See also World Education, *SELECT, Project Document (September 2010)*, 11-14. See also U.S. Department of State, "Guinea," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010*, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, section 7d; available from http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010.

²⁴⁸⁵ World Education, *SELECT*, *Project Document (September 2010)*, 19. See also International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Internationally Recognized Core Labour Standards in Guinea: Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Guinea*, Geneva, October 12 and 14, 2005; available from http://www.icftu.org/www/pdf/clsguinea2005.pdf.

²⁴⁸⁶ International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Guinea.

²⁴⁸⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report-2010: Guinea." See also Country of Return Information Project, *Country Sheet: Guinea*, European Commission, December 2008; available from http://www.cri-project.eu/cs/ cs-guinea-en.pdf.

²⁴⁸⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Guinea," sections 6-7. See also UN General Assembly Human Rights Council, *Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights, Civil, Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural, Including the Right to Development (A/HRC/7/8/Add.1)*, A/HRC/7/8/Add.1, March 4, 2008; available from http://dacccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/23/77/PDPF/G0811377.pdf?OpenElement. See also

U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report-2010: Guinea."

²⁴⁸⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Guinea," section 5. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Guinea." See also U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting, May 15, 2008*, para 1. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Sierra Leone." See also U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting, June 26, 2008*. See also Country of Return Information Project, *Country Sheet: Guinea*.

²⁴⁹⁰ U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting*, *February 28*, 2011, para 2D.

²⁴⁹¹ Human Rights Watch, *Exploitation and Abuse of Girl Domestic Workers*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2010: Guinea," section 7d.

²⁴⁹² Human Rights Watch, *Exploitation and Abuse of Girl Domestic Workers*, 27-28. See also Human Rights Watch, *Legal, Policy and Programmatic Responses to Protect Child Domestic Workers*, [online] 2007 [cited February 15, 2011]; available from http://hrw.org/reports/2007/guinea0607/10. htm. See also ILO, *Etude de Base sur le Travail de Enfants en Guinee*, 40-42. See also U.S. Department of State, «Country Reports- 2010: Guinea,» section 7d.

²⁴⁹³ Peter Easton, "Education and Koranic Literacy in West Africa," *IK Notes* no. 11 (August 1999); available from http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/iknt11.pdf. See also Peter Easton, Mark Peach, Ibrahima Lalya Bah, ElHadj Bella Doumboula, and Mohammed Lamine Barry, *Research Studies Series no.* 8, International Working Group on Nonformal Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, May 1997; available from http://www.adeanet.org/wgnfe/publications/abel/abel2.html. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Guinea." See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request C182: Guinea* (2007).

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- ²⁴⁹⁸ Princeton University, *Nous Aimons Etudier*, 7. See also Macro International, *SELECT*, 26.
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- ²⁵⁰¹ Government of Guinea, *Code de l'enfant, 2008*, articles 415-421. See also Government of Guinea, *Code du travail, 1988*, article 31.
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- ²⁵¹⁴ Ibid., para 2.1.
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- ²⁵¹⁷ Government of Guinea, Rapport de la Guinée sur le suivi de la Déclaration et du Plan d'action «Un monde plus digne des enfants», 6.
- ²⁵¹⁸ U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting*, *February 28*, 2011, paras 3D, 6D.
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